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Dear Bonnie,

This is an extremely difficult letter for me to write. I hope that you will take as a measure of my desperation the fact that I am moved to write it at all. The day that you threw me out of your office when I asked to talk to you about my assignment to Special Crimes I decided to fall back, say no more, & do the best that I could. However, I now find myself in

I've considered every alternative as carefully as I can, & this letter seems to me to be necessary.

Steve Brittain's assessment notwithstanding, I was deliciously happy in the trial section. I seldom saw you, & even more seldom talked to you, but I loved it. I couldn't wait to get to work in the morning, never minded staying late, & often put in week-end hours. My sick leave & vacation time piled up because I couldn't bear to miss work. I was constantly busy -- there was never a lack of work to be done -- & I am stimulated, even exhilarated by hard work. That's just my nature. I perform at my best under pressure. There's nothing that suits me better than doing ten things at once, & trial work suited me perfectly. In addition to enjoying myself thoroughly, I felt I was getting better & better at it. I saw progress, & maybe some glimmerings of talent. With every court appearance I felt an improvement both in my knowledge & my style. All I wanted was more, every chance I could get.

I honestly thought I was doing good work for you, Bonnie. I felt that I understood what you aspired for this office, & I was doing my very best to pursue & live up to it. I hoped that even though you never actually saw my performance, either in court or in the office, that you would get good feedback from the people I worked with or dealt with.

Instead, I got nicknamed "Niel." I will always believe that the Britt started that, & I think I know when & why. I

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I think it started back when you all were trying to decide whom to move over to Special Crimes earlier this year. The time you ended up moving you. I remember that period & decision well because the Britt told me I was under consideration, & we had a bad argument. That argument was not entirely job-related & was particularly unpleasant. There were personal ramifications that I'd rather not write about & that are now ancient history. The only lasting damage that was done was to your image of my attitude -- an image that I think is incorrect. [At least ~~was~~ incorrect until lately.] "Melancholy" is probably entirely appropriate now. [Maybe even charitable.] At any rate, back then I knew that the Britt had ~~given~~ a bad report on me back to you, but I relied heavily on the fact that you knew me pretty well, after all, to offset his remarks. It was not until the discussion that you & I had about my moving to the 126th that I learned my reliance was misplaced. Then I learned that you were very dissatisfied with my attitude. I fell back in dismay to figure out. I would invite you, Ronnie, to talk to Rose, or Charles, or Tense, or Emilie -- any of the people who have worked with me on a daily basis since the first of the year -- & ask them about my attitude. I have. Because I was concerned about your dissatisfaction.

So now we get down to moving me to Special Crimes. I have been here two weeks. I have 2 dentist cases left by Kuetz. One man came in to talk to me about his business partner stealing money. And I talked to a black rape victim because she was unhappy about the way her case was being investigated. Not only is the inactivity hard to deal with, but the "cases" I have are so far outside my range of knowledge and interest that I feel hopelessly inadequate. The only time I'm really of an use is when I'm left to answer the phone because everyone else is gone (like now, while I write this).

When you dropped it on me that I was going to Special Crimes I was laid pretty low. I felt kinda like a toddler stopped by a crackback block. I didn't even see it coming. You didn't want to talk to me about it. I had a long talk with John Fowles that helped a little. I am after all, an employee. I try to do as I'm told with diligence & loyalty to my boss. I do not think that my own little happiness is a paramount concern or even an important consideration in the handing out of assignments. I've always felt lucky & grateful just to be here at all. It is a privilege to work for you.

The problem is that I am miserable. These days I don't want to come to work, & I can't wait to leave. I can't see that I'm of any use to you at all, much less to the people who pay your salary. My unhappiness with the situation, cause me to think I must make some important decisions.

First & foremost, I'd like to stay with the DA's office. I love the people, & I am willing to be your goals. If there's any way, I want to be in on it. I am not Paul Edwards threatening to quit, I am May just asking for a little enlightenment. Does this assignment mean you want to get rid of me? Have I fucked up some way I don't even know about? Or am I just not cutting it? Am I of some value to you as an employee? Is there a chance that I can be assigned to work more suited to my abilities?

What's going on?

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I have a lot of faith in you to resolve difficult situations. Above & beyond everything else you are & always will be a hero of mine. I love the person you are & the person you try to be. I'm proud to be associated with you. I hope this letter isn't too far out of line. You & I have enjoyed an unconventional relationship, & I'm trying to play it absolutely straight as an employee & as a friend.

Love,  
Margaret